THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) There is no plan with the Government at present to install New Technology based OCB Telephone Exchanges in Hamirpur, Bilaspur and Una Districts of Himachal Pradesh. The existing CDOT MAX-XL exchanges working in these areas are fully meeting the requirement. However, it is planned to provide an independent OCB Trunk Automatic Exchange at Hamirpur in the year 2002-03.

Supply of Telephone Directories

1197. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that authorised regular telephone users are required to be provided with telephone directories periodically, free of cost by their respective Telephone District Authorities;

(b) if so, the details of the Rules/Government orders regulating publication and supply of telephone directories to the users;

(c) whether it is also a fact that telephone directories are not published at a regular intervals by various telephone districts as well as MTNL;

(d) whether some Telephone Districts are not providing telephone directories to its users free of cost instead they are charged for it; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Telephone directory is to be provided every alternate year and in the intervening period, a supplementary directory is to be provided to the subscriber. As per the present scheme, one directory is supplied free of charge for every telephone connection and for every extension of PABX (Private Automatic branch Exchange) irrespective of the fact that more than one telephone is working for

the same subscriber. For subscriber, having more than one connection at the same address, the number of directories are restricted to 50% of Direct Exchange Lines (DELs) with maximum of ten copies.

(c) Telephone directories are published at regular intervals by Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. (MTNL) and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL). However, the delay in printing of some directories is on account of.

(i) Default by contractor.

(ii) Non-availability of contractors.

(d) and (e) Any extra copy required by any subscriber over and above the prescribed limit are charged at the rates determined by the field units.

Department of Posts' new agenda

1198. SHRI C. P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Posts has formulated new agenda in its operation to raise productivity and lower costs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any MoU has been signed with La poste of France and Emirates Post in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the step proposed to be taken for corporatisation of postal services in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The Department has been trying to computerize its operations with a view to providing a more efficient and cost effective service. A total of 1666 post offices have already been computerised as on 31.3.2001. A total of 150 high speed VSATs have been